

**New Milford Board of Education
 Committee on Learning Sub-Committee
 February 17, 2009
 Lillis Administration Building, Room 2**

Present:	Mr. David Lawson, Chairperson*
	Mrs. Amy Llerena*
	Mrs. Alexandra Thomas*
	Dr. Lisa Diamond, Board Chairperson*
	*Committee Members
Not Present:	Mr. Bill Wellman

Also Present:	Dr. JeanAnn C. Paddyfote, Superintendent of Schools
	Mr. Thomas Mulvihill, Assistant Superintendent
	Les Weintraub, Principal, Sarah Noble Intermediate School
	Jan Allsworth, 5 th grade Teacher, SNIS
	Nancy Zimmerman, 5 th grade Teacher, SNIS
	Eileen Reed, NMHS Science Department
	Diana Wright, Teacher, NMHS
	Keith Lipinsky, PE Teacher, NMHS

1.	The meeting of the New Milford Board of Education Committee on Learning sub-committee was called to order at 7:30 p.m.	Call to Order
2.	There was no public comment.	Public Comment
3.	Discussion and possible action	Discussion and Possible Action
3A .	<p>Approval of School Improvement Plan</p> <p>Mr. Mulvihill introduced Les Weintraub, Principal at Sarah Noble Intermediate School, Jan Allsworth, and Nancy Zimmerman, 5th grade teachers at SNIS. Ms. Allsworth is leading CALI (Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative) efforts at Sarah Noble School and is helping other schools get started. Ms. Zimmerman is also a leader and is one of a group of six who helped formulate this plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Allsworth explained that the “Learning Leader” team met with Mr. Weintraub to determine what makes the biggest impact on the children in the school. They looked at the test and 	Approval of School Improvement Plan

	<p>instructional initiatives and grouped them together. Finally they chose 3 strategies to follow for this plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Weintraub said they called the State to determine the format and look of other plans so they could follow that format. They came up with the strategies that have the greatest impact on student achievement.• Ms. Allsworth said for strategy #1, SNIS received training from Education Connection through the State. She said as a result of CALI, the entire school now meets as a team to look at data, discuss strengths and weaknesses with literacy as the focus. Strategies to improve learning were implemented. A goal for a percentage of proficiency in literature has been set. Instruction was then based on what was learned in the data collection process. Every teacher in the school was given a book which presents classroom instruction that works. Discussion groups were formed as part of this strategy and the teachers are very receptive to meeting to determine concerns, struggles, and learning outcomes.• Mr. Weintraub said there are 84 teachers at SNIS and 78 have selected to participate – the 6 that haven't are selected character education based on their current role at the school (i.e. counselors, social workers, etc.).• Ms. Zimmerman spoke about strategy #3 which calls for the development of a pacing calendar for language arts. The pacing calendar will keep all teachers and students closely together in their teaching of concepts. The goal is to have a pacing calendar in place for Math by 2010. Formative assessments are built into the pacing calendar.• Mrs. Thomas asked if the budget would allow for the students to all be taught with the same resources? Ms. Zimmerman responded “yes” that teachers are still	
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	<p>using their separate materials but this strategy allows for a similar framework for content and skills to be taught.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Mulvihill said that the CALI project has increased scores in areas that are focused on – reading, for instance, did improve.• Mrs. Thomas asked how the time for teachers to talk together was accommodated? Ms. Zimmerman said 3 hours are used for the discussion – the first hour involves teaching the teachers, 2nd hour is planning the lesson for students, and the 3rd hour is the discussion – most teachers stayed over the hour for the discussion. Mr. Weintraub said these 3 hours were on the teacher’s own time and were not part of a professional development time.• Mr. Weintraub addressed strategy #2 which he said is in alignment with strategy #5 of the school’s 5 year plan. He said part of strategy #2 was hiring a new principal which had been done. He said the next step was establishing committees to devise a mission statement and then to collect information from 6 schools similar to SNIS in this DRG. He said right now they are just collecting the information with no commitment for using any of it later on.• Mr. Lawson asked about flexible versus block scheduling and Mr. Weintraub responded that the school likes flexible scheduling because it does not box them into 40 minute structured time slots for a specific subject. <p>Mrs. Thomas moved to bring the School Improvement Plan to the full Board for approval, seconded by Mrs. Llerena and passed unanimously.</p>	<p>Motion made and passed unanimously to bring school improvement plan to full Board for approval.</p>
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<p>3B.</p> <p>3B1.</p> <p>3B2.</p>	<p>Review and Approval of Curricula</p> <p>Plant Science I Plant Science II</p> <p>Mr. Mulvhill introduced Eileen Reed and Diana Wright from the science department of New Milford High School.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Reed said these curricula are designed for special needs children and non-college bound children who need to be exposed to different careers. • Mr. Lawson asked Ms. Wright to describe the facilities and Ms. Wright said they do not actually have a real greenhouse but rather several long benches with artificial lighting. They have a water garden which the students take care of including all the maintenance. • Mrs. Thomas asked Ms. Wright for her background and Ms. Wright said she has a dual major of botany and plant science and a masters in teaching science. <p>Mr. Mulvihill said he is impressed with the content being presented and mastered by these students in learning the vocabulary they need to know. Ms. Wright said the special education department is helpful in teaching the children to learn the vocabulary and the average students help the other students.</p>	<p>Review and Approval of Curricula</p> <p>Plant Science I Plant Science II</p>
<p>3B3.</p>	<p>Academic Chemistry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Reed said this Academic Chemistry curricula is designed for college bound Juniors. She said it introduces students to chemistry at a college level and meets state enrichment standards and national science standards. • Mrs. Thomas said she appreciated the amount of work put into developing these curricula. • Mr. Lawson asked if there was enough lab time to which Mrs. Reed said “yes”, but lately the snow days have interrupted their lab time. 	<p>Academic Chemistry</p>

3B4.	<p>Adventure Education</p> <p>Mr. Mulvihill introduced Keith Lipinsky, a PE teacher at New Milford High School.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Lipinsky noted that it is the development of different programs like this that keeps the teachers coming to work everyday. He said this is offered to 7 to 12th grades and is more of a unit than a semester type course. He said the ultimate goal is to have “low” and “high” elements of adventure programming at one of the schools. He said this is really a social domain activity requiring students to interact with each other and help each other through the course or activities.• Mr. Mulvihill noted that the committee devising the curricula spoke with Mrs. Thomas because this is her area of expertise. Mrs. Thomas said that project adventure is safer to do than any organized sport and maybe grant money could be sought to get the courses back up to include the equipment for the “high” elements. She also asked if the listing in the curricula limited the scope in any way.• Mr. Lipinsky said they are flexible and Mr. Mulvihill said since it continues from grade to grade, they did not want to have the same thing taught over and over again and this curricula allows for a progression to be maintained.• Mrs. Thomas said some of the items needed for this program could be built by the shop class or Projects Unlimited.• Mr. Mulvihill indicated he would work with Mr. Lipinsky to draft wording to allow more flexibility in the use of activities in the curriculum from grade to grade and have it ready for the meeting in March when approval will be formally voted on.	Adventure Education
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	<p>Mrs. Llerena moved to send to the full Board for approval the following curricula:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant Science I • Plant Science II • Academic Chemistry • Adventure Education <p>Mrs. Thomas seconded the motion.</p> <p>Mrs. Thomas said she appreciated the hard work that went into developing these curricula.</p>	<p>The motion made and passed unanimously to bring the following curricular to the full Board for approval:</p> <p>Plant Science I Plant Science II Academic Chemistry Adventure Education .</p>
4.	<p>Adjournment</p> <p>Mrs. Thomas moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 pm, seconded by Mrs. Llerena and passed unanimously.</p>	<p>Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn.</p>

Respectfully Submitted,

David A. Lawson, Chairman
 Committee on Learning